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Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 11 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, dated 11 February 2014, in reaction to the easing of procedures for entry to the occupied Georgian territory of Abkhazia from the Russian Federation.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex issued as a document of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 34.

(*Signed*) Kaha **Imnadze**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in reaction to the easing of procedures for entry to the occupied territory of Abkhazia from the Russian Federation

As reported on 10 February 2014, Moscow and its occupation regime in Abkhazia have decided to simplify visa requirements for foreigners wishing to enter the occupied Georgian region of Abkhazia from Russia during the Olympic Games in Sochi (as from 10 February). This decision is yet another provocative action against Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and aims to mislead foreign citizens.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia once again calls upon the members of the national delegations and the citizens of foreign countries taking part in the Winter Olympics to refrain from entering Georgia's occupied regions. The Foreign Ministry of Georgia also wishes to underline the fact that, according to the "Law of Georgia on the Occupied Territories", Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region are under a special legal regime which restricts free movement in Georgia's occupied territories.

The Law notably states that foreign citizens may enter the occupied territories only:

(a) From the Zugdidi municipality to the territory of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia;

(b) From the Gori municipality to the Tskhinvali region (the former South Ossetian Autonomous Region).

Violating the "Law of Georgia on the Occupied Territories" is a criminal offence punishable by Georgia's penal code. In addition to the other preventive measures taken prior to the Olympic Games, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia once again calls upon all countries taking part in the Sochi Olympics to warn their citizens not to enter Georgia's occupied regions in violation of the "Law of Georgia on the Occupied Territories".

Tbilisi, 11 February 2014